



# BRITISH EDUCATION

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# BRITISH EDUCATION

BY

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# BRITISH EDUCATION

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE educational systems of England and Wales may conveniently be dealt with together, since the Acts of Parliament which have regulated the development of popular education in England apply also to Wales, and the Board of Education in London deals with education in Wales as well as in England. The Scottish system, however, differs in important respects from the English, and is regulated by separate Education Acts for Scotland. In this pamphlet it will only be possible to deal with the national system of England and Wales, adding a brief reference to education in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

British Education looks, at first sight, chaotic. But on examination it is seen to be complicated but not chaotic. It is complicated because it has grown out of so many different originating causes and tries to satisfy so many requirements. But the State provision and the various forms of voluntary provision do, when taken together, form a national system which, at the present time, is full of life and growth.

British Education has developed gradually, in accordance with national characteristics, of which it affords a striking illustration. Of these the most important are an innate dislike of compulsion and a reliance on voluntary effort, a practical capacity for mending rather than ending existing institutions, strength of denominational feeling in religion, and a disinclination to take long views. Right up to the present time State intervention has been hampered by religious differences. Yet there has been no breaking with the past; only a series of modifications and developments due to increased clearness of vision and sense of social responsibility.

A brief reference to the past is necessary if the present situation is to be understood. Looking backwards we find that, though cathedral and monastic schools appear as early as the seventh century, the real starting-point of the British system of education is not the establishment of schools but the rise of the Universities of Oxford and Cam-

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bridge. Oxford is mentioned as long ago as 1168 as a place to which students gathered to listen to a famous master. The first mention of Cambridge is when a number of Oxford students removed thither in 1209. There follows the founding of a large number of the Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. The next step was taken when in 1382 William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, founded not only a College at Oxford, but a Grammar School at Winchester to act as a feeder to it. King Henry VI did the same thing in 1440 in founding Eton College at Windsor and King's College, Cambridge. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the foundation of numerous Grammar Schools in various parts of England, and five of those founded in the sixteenth century survive today as great Public Schools.<sup>1</sup>

But although the statutes of these schools often made special provision for "poor scholars", we must not see in them the beginnings of national education. They were intended to supply the Universities with good Latinists who should proceed, in due course, to serve Church and State as members of the learned professions. We must look elsewhere than in England for the first recognition of the right of every citizen to education. In Scotland an Act was passed as early as 1696 requiring the establishment of a school in every parish at the local expense. In Ireland political reasons brought about intervention by the State in education in 1733. *Schulpflichtigkeit* (school-obligation) is found in several parts of Germany in the seventeenth century. In France a detailed system of national education was devised by Turgot in 1775. In England it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that national interest in education showed itself on a large scale. It took the form, according to English custom, of voluntary effort. It was one of the expressions of the great humanitarian revival of that time. The enthusiasts who established Day Schools, Sunday Schools, Ragged Schools, and Orphan Schools were fellow workers with such people as Wilberforce the anti-slavery leader, John Howard and Elizabeth Fry the pioneers of prison reform, Lord Shaftesbury the champion of the child factory workers. The two most important were Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster. Their motives were philanthropic and religious. Bell represented the National Church, Lancaster represented the Dissenting or Non-conformist Bodies, whose members were still excluded by religious

<sup>1</sup> See *The Old Grammar Schools*, Foster Watson (Cambridge University Press).

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tests from the Universities. The efforts of Bell led to the foundation, in 1811, of the "National Society for promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church", while those of Lancaster produced a rival Society, the "British and Foreign School Society", which limited its religious teaching to "general Christian principles". With these two Societies the continuous development of popular education in England begins. Owing to the greater wealth of the Church its schools soon outnumbered those of the non-conformists, and in the great majority of schools the religious teaching was therefore controlled by the Church.

In 1833 the State at length appears on the scene, granting a subsidy of £20,000 per annum "in aid of private subscriptions for the erection of school-houses for the education of the poorer classes in Great Britain". And as regards the education of the "poorer classes" the position remained essentially the same from 1833 till 1870 except that many new schools were provided and the annual subsidy steadily increased. In 1861 it was £840,000. In 1870 comes a turning-point in the story. British public opinion was at length convinced that education was a State duty. The Reform Bill of 1867 had given parliamentary votes to many who could not read or write, and the Government realised that "we must educate our masters". By the Education Act of 1870 a State system was established with the object of filling in the gaps left by the voluntary system. In districts in which schools were needed School Boards were set up to provide them at the local expense by means of a school "rate". These schools were known as "Board Schools". In the large towns where the deficiency of schools was greatest, they soon became common. But while the Church schools taught the doctrines of the Church, no denominational religious teaching was allowed in the Board Schools.

So it may be said that after 1870 England had a national though not a uniform system of elementary education. We must now pass on to the position at the end of the nineteenth century. Elementary education was now available for every child. Attendance had been made compulsory in 1880. Teachers had a hard life: for every teacher, including more than 30,000 pupil teachers (apprentices, aged 14-18), there were, on an average, 47 children attending school. But in many ways the educational standard had risen, and maintenance costs had greatly increased. The Church authorities were complaining bitterly of the intolerable strain of keeping their schools up to the level

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of the rate-supported Board Schools. But the great problem at this time was how to satisfy the growing demand for education above the elementary stage. The old Endowed Grammar Schools were few and far between, and unsuited to supply the new demand. But when the London School Board and a few others began to provide something more than elementary education they were stopped by a legal decision that they had no power to do so.

### 2. THE PRESENT POSITION

The foregoing reference to the past<sup>1</sup> has been necessary in order to show the significance of the Education Act of 1902. This Act remains the corner-stone of the State system of education in England and Wales. Its essential points were as follows :

- (1) It abolished the School Boards and made the County Councils and the Councils of County Boroughs (*i.e.* Boroughs with a population of more than 50,000) the Local Education Authorities (known as L.E.A.s).
- (2) It gave the L.E.A.s power to supply or assist education other than Elementary (*i.e.* Secondary and Technical Schools).
- (3) It rescued the Voluntary (nearly all Church) Schools from their financial troubles by requiring the L.E.A.s to finance them in return for the control of the instruction (other than religious) given in them. The Managers of the Voluntary Schools remained responsible for the provision and upkeep of the school buildings. Elementary education thus became a single system, except in so far as religious instruction was concerned.

All the above enactments remain part of the Education Law of England and Wales today, and appear in the Act of 1921,<sup>2</sup> which codified the previous Education Acts, including the important Act of 1918 which required the L.E.A.s to prepare schemes for the general development of education in their areas. Finally the Act of 1936 raised the school leaving age from 14 to 15 with effect from 1st September, 1939. But owing to the outbreak of war on September 3, 1939, this enactment has not come into force and children may still

<sup>1</sup> For further details see Adamson, *A Short History of Education* (Cambridge University Press), and for fuller treatment of the whole subject see *The Educational System of England and Wales*, Ward (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>2</sup> Published by H.M. Stationery Office.

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leave school at the end of the school term in which they reach the age of 14.

The Act of 1902 was only carried after long and strenuous debate. It was introduced by a Conservative Government, and the Liberal Opposition objected strongly to the giving of aid from local rates to Church Schools in which 1,000,000 non-conformist children were perforce being educated. The dispute flared up again in 1906 and 1910, but the dual system of Voluntary and Council Schools side by side has outlasted it, and survives today. Though the religious question still complicates the organisation of elementary education, it has now, on the whole, yielded place to broad considerations of educational efficiency.

In the State-controlled part (as distinct from the voluntary or independent part) of the national system there are three main agents : Parliament, the Board of Education, and the Local Education Authorities. We may now briefly consider each of these.

Parliament is, of course, supreme : all the powers of the Board of Education and the Local Education Authorities are derived from Acts of Parliament. These Acts require, or permit the Board of Education, or the L.E.A., or the school managers, to do this or that. They also make it the parent's duty "to cause his child to receive efficient elementary instruction". By means of Royal Commissions Parliament has also influenced the independent parts of the educational system, such as the Universities and "Public Schools". The total sum which may be spent by the Board of Education in payment of grants is decided each year by Parliament after consideration of the Board's estimate of its needs. As a rule the Board repays to the L.E.A.s in grants half of their expenditure. The net annual State expenditure on education is about £100,000,000 of which just over half is provided by Parliament out of taxes and the remainder by the L.E.A.s out of local rates.

The Board of Education has only a short history. It was established by Parliament in 1900 as the single Central Authority, exercising the powers previously distributed amongst several Government departments. It is, by law, charged with "the superintendence of matters relating to education in England and Wales". It is not really a "Board"; it means, in practice, the Education Minister, who is styled President of the Board of Education, a Secretary who is a member of Parliament, and a staff of civil servants with the Permanent

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Secretary of the Board at their head. The President is responsible to Parliament for all actions of the Board.

It is important to realise that the Board does not provide schools or settle the curriculum or appoint and pay the teachers. All such matters are the business of the L.E.A.s. Nor has the Board any authority over private schools or the "Public Schools" or the Universities. Its essential duty is to satisfy itself that the requirements of the Education Acts are being carried out and to distribute the Parliamentary grant. Parliament, through the Education Acts, prescribes what is to be done, the L.E.A.s actually do it, while the Board of Education guides and controls the doing of it, having in the background the compelling but seldom exercised power of withholding grants from any L.E.A. which is failing to perform its duties.

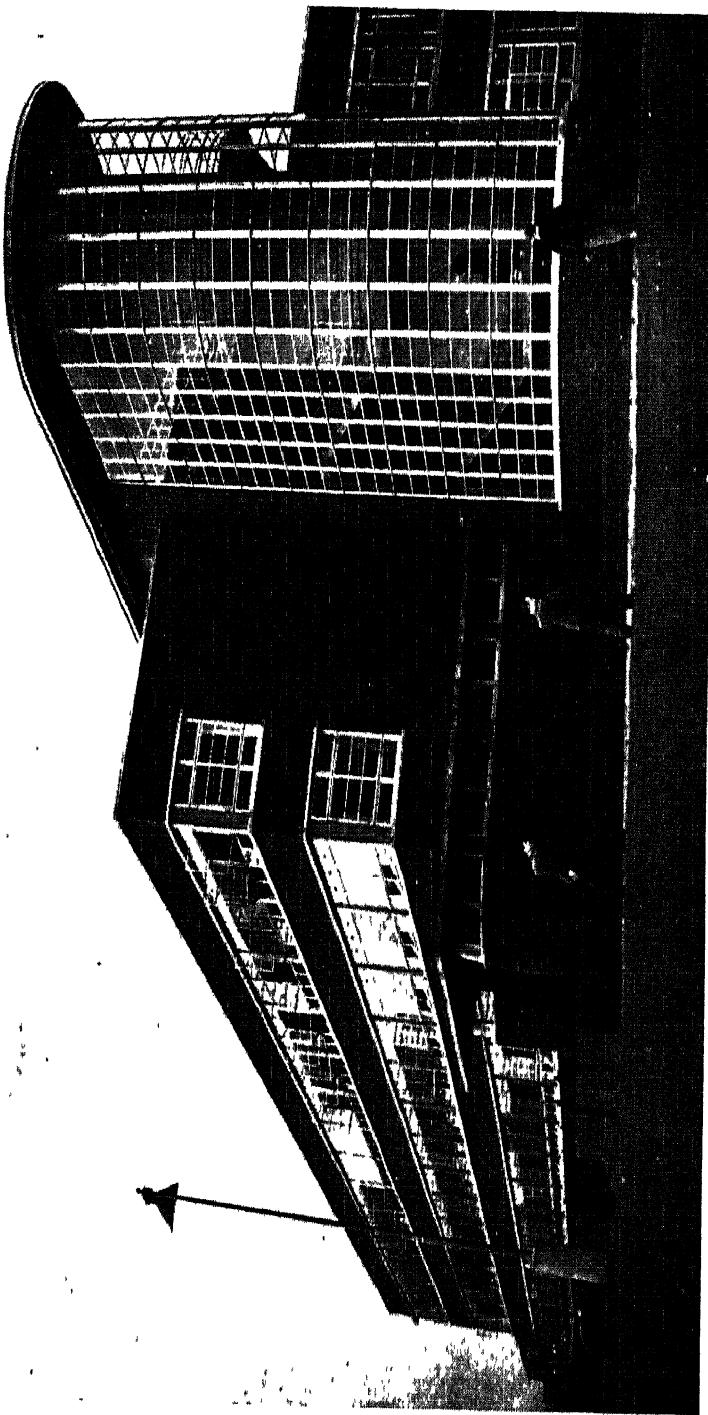
The Board is given very large powers to make regulations as to how, in particular circumstances and cases, the law is to be carried out, and to define the conditions under which grants will be paid. Its approval is required for any important step contemplated by a L.E.A., such as the building of a new school. Such proposals are carefully examined at the permanent offices of the Board in London, and approved if they satisfy regulations and do not conflict with the educational policy which the Board is pursuing for the country as a whole. It is essential that the schemes of the L.E.A.s for the "progressive development and comprehensive organisation of education in their areas" should be submitted to the Board in order that the Board may be satisfied that educational developments throughout the country are consistent with each other, and that too wide a gulf does not separate the enterprising authorities from any which are disposed to lag behind.

It might be supposed that in these delicate circumstances, when one body is called upon to act and the other to superintend, criticise, and advise, constant disputes and disagreements would occur. No doubt there is, or has been, plenty of good-natured grumbling—no one who has had anything to do with educational administration can fail to recall occasions when someone connected with one of these two bodies has expressed himself in forcible terms about the defects of the other. But in practice the system has worked very well, and the relation between the Board and the L.E.A.s is one of "active and constructive partnership". When the L.E.A.s were first created and the work of educational administration was new to them the Board's

Musical youngsters in an Infants School

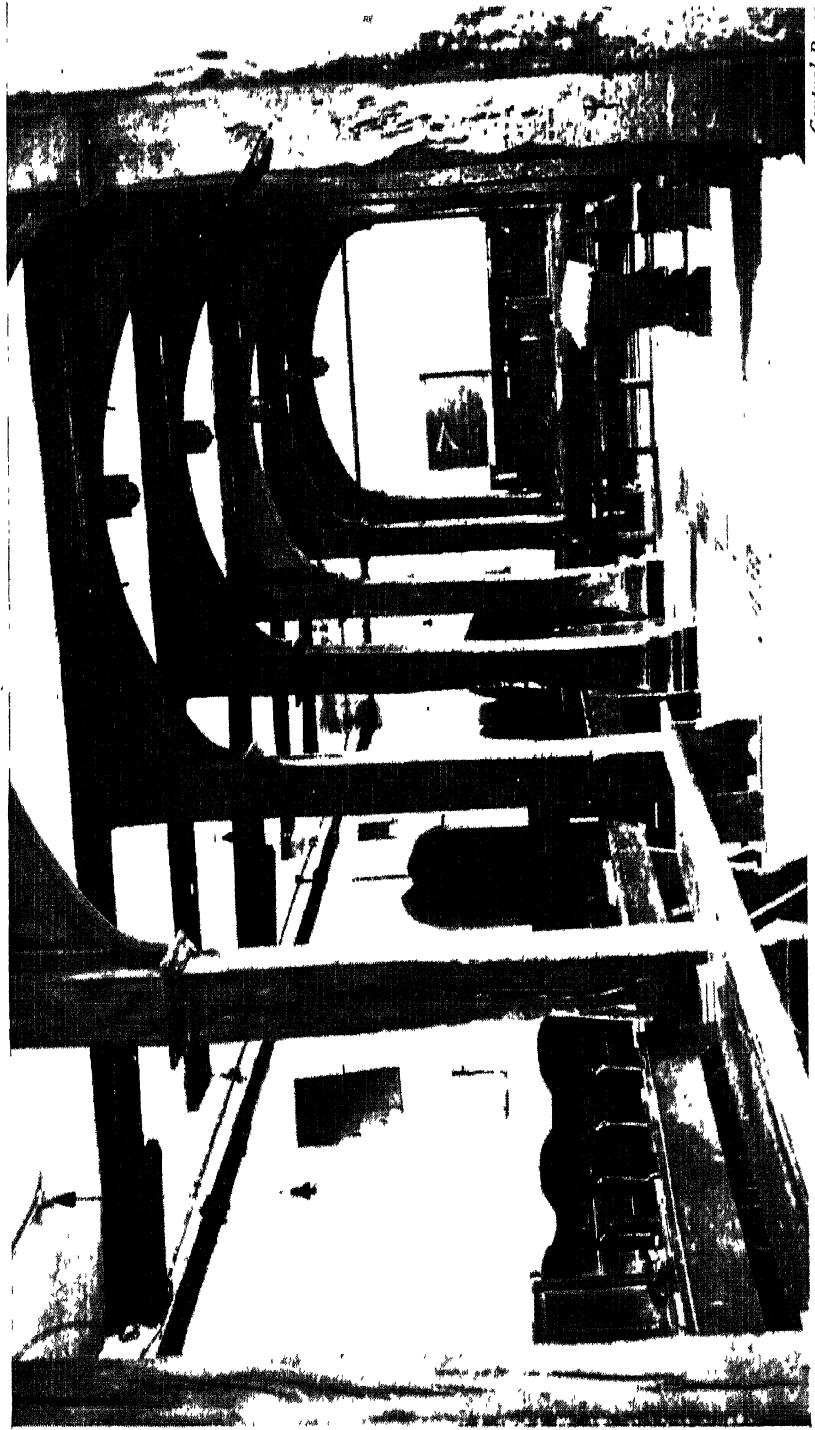


*Fox*



Chislehurst and Sidcup County Secondary School

Lower School, Eton College



Cricket at Rugby School



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supervision was a good deal closer. But general expressions, such as "suitable" and "adequate", have now replaced precise statements of requirements, and the L.E.A.s are relied on to interpret such terms for themselves. A notable illustration of this is the Code of Regulations for Elementary Schools, now whittled down from 50 pages to 10. And the Board's attitude to the curriculum is shown in a passage in the preface to the *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers*, the last edition of which was published in 1937:<sup>1</sup> "The only uniformity of practice that the Board of Education desire to see in the teaching of Public Elementary Schools is that each teacher shall think for himself, and work out for himself such methods of teaching as may use his powers to the best advantage and be best suited to the particular needs and conditions of the School. Uniformity in details of practice (except in the mere routine of school management) is not desirable even if it were attainable. But freedom implies a corresponding responsibility in its use."

For the purpose of carrying out its duties of superintendence and advice the Board employs two types of officials, the office staff and the Inspectorate. The office staff are normally housed in London, and their chief is the Permanent Secretary, who deals with matters of special importance and keeps in close touch with the Minister of Education. The Inspectors, or outside staff, are styled "His Majesty's" Inspectors, as originally they reported, in theory, to the Sovereign in Council. Separate Inspectors are appointed for Elementary, Secondary, and Technical Schools, and each has a district assigned to him. There are also specialist Inspectors of such subjects as Domestic Science, Physical Training, Music, and Art.

The two first Inspectors were appointed in 1839. Their primary duty was to collect facts and information and "to verify the fulfilment of the conditions on which grants are made". But from the first they did constructive work as well; they were missionaries as well as Inspectors. An Inspector reports regularly to the Board on the efficiency of the schools in his district, but the main purpose of most of his (or her) visits to the schools will be to discuss various details of organisation and teaching method with the Head Teacher and the members of the staff, and to put his experience at their disposal. He will frequently meet and confer with the officials of the L.E.A., and the Board ask his opinion on proposals sent up to them by the L.E.A.,

<sup>1</sup> H.M. Stationery Office.

who have probably already discussed them with him. Many Education Committees and Sub-Committees of L.E.A.s invite him to attend those of their meetings in which he is interested. Copies of his reports to the Board are forwarded to the L.E.A.s and, unless they have an adequate staff of Inspectors of their own, as London and some of the larger Authorities have, they will depend on him and his assistants for information about the condition of their schools. The Board carry out a full inspection of each of the grant-aided Secondary Schools at least every ten years : for this purpose the various subjects of the curriculum are distributed amongst a panel of Inspectors who may spend four or more days investigating the whole working of the school. After their visit they generally hold a conference with the members of the Governing Body, and furnish them and the Board with a full account of the school as seen through their eyes together with any recommendations that they may wish to make.

H.M. Inspectors have no power to give any orders. They represent the Board of Education while the schools are the schools of the L.E.A. or the Governing Body, not of the Board. But they have opportunities, such as no other group of persons in the country can possess, of gaining first-hand knowledge of what the schools of today are really like, of observing their methods of teaching and organisation, curricula and experiments, and of estimating their needs, so that their opinions are at any rate based on a great wealth of experience. Through their visits and reports, and through special reports, suggestions, pamphlets, and circulars issued from time to time, as well as through courses for teachers of various subjects conducted as a rule by H.M. Inspectors, the Board do in practice exercise a great influence upon the schools.<sup>1</sup>

The function of the L.E.A.s has already been explained. The County Councils and the County Borough Councils are the L.E.A.s, except that by the Act of 1902 Boroughs which have not the status of Counties, but which have a population of 10,000 or more, and Urban Districts with a population of more than 20,000, were made the Authorities for elementary education within their boundaries. This was a concession to the local interest in elementary education which had grown up under the School Boards, but it certainly tends to complicate administration. L.E.A.s with powers over elementary education only are commonly called Part III Authorities, while the

<sup>1</sup> Also see *The Board of Education*, Selby-Bigge (Putnam).

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County and County Borough Councils, which have full powers, are known as Part II Authorities, these names being derived from the parts of the Act which deal with elementary and higher education.

Few tears were shed for the School Boards when the L.E.A.s replaced them. Though much good work stood to their credit, their areas were too small and it was clear that they could never carry out a general policy as larger Authorities could. There were 2527 School Boards (as compared with 328 L.E.A.s, of which 160 are Part III Authorities), and the smaller ones were not always able to secure the services of really suitable members.

The Councils are required by law to have Education Committees through which they exercise their powers, except that the actual amount of expenditure must be determined by the Council itself. These Committees are often referred to, incorrectly, as the L.E.A. They consist of members of the Council and other men and women chosen for their experience or interest in education, often former teachers and education officials. These Committees are groups of public-spirited persons of all professions and callings who are willing, without payment, to give up their time to this particular form of State service.

The post of chief official of the L.E.A. is an important and well-paid one, and requires and attracts very capable men, who, in the case of the larger L.E.A.s, have a large staff under them. Their official title is usually Director of Education, or Chief Education Officer, or sometimes simply Secretary for Education.

### 3. THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We may now pass from educational machinery to the schools themselves. Of these the Public Elementary Schools are, as regards numbers in attendance, by far the most important. As has been explained, they are either Council Schools provided by the L.E.A.s or Voluntary Schools aided and largely controlled by them. The total number of Council Schools in England and Wales is 11,707 as against 11,118 Voluntary Schools : in England alone there are 10,553 Voluntary to 10,363 Council Schools. The number of Voluntary Schools is decreasing by about 100 annually as the rising standard of educational requirements and the progress of reorganisation (to be described later) constrains the Managers to close their schools or hand

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them over to the L.E.A. The Voluntary Schools include 9480 Church of England and 1323 Roman Catholic Schools. Their average size is much less than that of the Council Schools, and the number of children attending them is considerably less than half that in the Council Schools.

According to figures given in the report of the Board of Education, issued in May 1939, about 90 per cent of the children between 5 and 11 are attending P.E. Schools. After 11 there is a fall in this percentage, representing the children who leave for Secondary Schools.

P.E. School buildings differ so widely that it is impossible to give any general description of them. A traveller through the countryside will soon learn to distinguish the typical village school. Most commonly it will be a Church (voluntary) School, near the church itself, built in ecclesiastical style with high-pitched roof and pointed windows, and perhaps labelled "National School". Less often it will be a plainer building with its origin shown by "Board School" in brick letters over the porch. Many of the older schools were at first merely a single large room. "A barn forms no bad model" was once the official view of the Central Authority. Often it is easy to trace the alterations and improvements made piecemeal as past Inspectors pointed out the need for them to the School Managers. Such improvements would be the addition of separate cloak-rooms at each end of the building, increased playground space and separation of boys' and girls' playgrounds, a separate class-room for the infants, the division of the main room by partitions to form class-rooms, improvements to the lighting by the enlargement of the windows or the insertion of new ones, proper ventilation, a hot-water heating system, modern desks and furniture.

The larger town Board Schools were built later than most of the Church Schools. The usual plan before the Great War was a central hall surrounded by class-rooms. But this causes constant interruption to the classes in Singing, Dancing, Physical Training, and Dramatic Performance taken under modern methods in the hall, and the plan now favoured is for the hall to be entirely separate while the class-rooms open into a corridor. The Board of Education has a "Black List", first compiled in 1908, of schools with unsatisfactory premises, but by the improvement or closure of schools it has now been reduced from nearly 3000 to about 800.

The great progress that has taken place in elementary and indeed

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in all forms of education during the present century has been essentially realistic : it has been the result of facing facts, of recognising more clearly the actual needs of individual children in relation to their home surroundings, their physical condition, and their mentality, and then consciously endeavouring to supply such training as will make the most of them, as individuals, mentally, morally, and physically, and best fit them for the kind of life that they are likely to live in the modern industrial world, while ensuring at the same time that no gifted child shall be prevented by poverty from receiving higher education.

The growth of the School Medical Service is perhaps the best illustration of such modern forms of progress. It was very apparent in the earlier years of the present century that there were many children, especially in infant schools in the poorer urban districts, who were working at school lessons when their primary needs were really physical—cleanliness, proper nourishment, clothing, and rest ; and that many of them were suffering from ailments the treatment of which was much more important to them than schooling. The school teachers fully recognised this ; often at their own expense they generously helped to provide proper food, clothing, etc., for such children, and by 1905 a certain amount of medical inspection was provided voluntarily. Since 1906 the L.E.A.s have had power to provide meals for children, since 1907 they have been required to provide for their systematic medical inspection, and it is now their duty to "attend to the health and physical condition" of all children attending L.E.A. schools. As a result they have provided more than 2400 clinics and their staff is equivalent to some 730 doctors and nearly 800 dentists working full time. Almost all the L.E.A.s now exercise their powers to provide free meals for necessitous children and more than 150,000 children attending Elementary Schools receive free breakfast, dinner, or tea, while under the "Milk in Schools" scheme more than 54 per cent are supplied with milk, either free or at half price. The Board of Education, in their report for 1938, express a hope for a substantial increase in the supply of free meals and milk to necessitous children. School Care Committees, composed of voluntary workers, are sometimes attached to schools or groups of schools, and interest themselves in the welfare of children who need individual attention. All the London schools have such committees. Photographs of school children in the poorer districts present a striking

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contrast, in respect of physique, clothing, and general appearance, to photographs of the children of the same places at the beginning of this century. The improvement in national physique in the last twenty years is illustrated by the results of the medical examination of militiamen in June 1939. Of the first 20,000 examined, 84.5 per cent were classed in Grade I. This has been contrasted with the statement in the Report of the Ministry of National Service (1917-19) that "Medical examinations showed that of every nine men of military age in Great Britain on the average three were perfectly fit and healthy".

As early as the age of 2 a child may find himself in a State School, since nursery schools have been recognised and aided by the State since 1918, and L.E.A.s are permitted to provide them. The P.E. Schools themselves may include baby or nursery classes for children from 3 to 5. In a nursery school the class-rooms are mostly of the open-air kind, and the children generally attend from 8 A.M. till 5 or 5.30 P.M., having breakfast, dinner, and tea at school. The number of nursery schools is increasing rapidly : at present there are 114, accommodating nearly 9000 children. Half of them are provided by voluntary effort and half by the L.E.A.s. Nursery schools and classes are only needed where home conditions are not satisfactory. They are conducted on the lines inspired by Froebel and Madame Montessori, most of the time is given to play and free movement, and there are no definite lessons beyond talking, saying and singing rhymes, and counting.

What may be called the infant school stage of the P.E. School runs from the ages of 5 to 7 or 8. It was formerly thought necessary to give these children plenty of serious teaching as soon as possible, but it is now realised that nothing is gained in the long run by introducing regular lessons very early. The children actively explore their surroundings and express themselves through speech, games, drawing, simple handwork, and dramatic performance.

There is no need to describe the curriculum of the normal Elementary School.<sup>1</sup> It does not include a foreign language, though in some Central schools for selected pupils which under the Board's

<sup>1</sup> For full account see *The Primary School* (Report of Consultative Committee, H.M. Stationery Office); *Our Public Elementary Schools*, Sir Michael Sadler (Thornton Butterworth); also *Education for Citizenship in Elementary Schools* (published by the Oxford University Press for the Association for Education in Citizenship).

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regulations are classed as elementary, French is taught, and pupils may even pass the School Certificate Examination, which is intended for Secondary Schools. But premises, organisation, and curriculum of Elementary Schools have all been much affected by the important change known as "reorganisation" which is now taking place.

The Consultative Committee, a standing Committee appointed by law to advise the Board of Education when it was first created, have issued a number of reports on educational questions which have greatly influenced the Board, the L.E.A.s, and all concerned in education. In 1926 they issued a report on the Education of the Adolescent, generally known as the Hadow Report after the Chairman, Sir Henry Hadow.<sup>1</sup> They distinguished primary education ending at 11+ and post-primary education from 11+ till 14+ or 15+. They recommended that at the age of 11+ all children should have a change of school, those not proceeding to Secondary Schools to pass into Central or Senior Schools for a post-primary course lasting three or four years. Such a course would differ from that of the Secondary School through the importance attached to practical instruction and manual work and through the "realistic" bias given to the other studies. They considered that these studies should be related more closely to industrial, commercial, or rural life, so that the children's interest might be stimulated through perceiving the bearing of their studies on their careers. Children from a number of junior schools might proceed to a single Central or Senior School, which would thus be large enough for separate courses of different types to be organised to suit the children's needs.

The Board of Education and the L.E.A.s accepted these recommendations, which were indeed being put into practice by several progressive L.E.A.s before the report appeared. They are now being gradually carried out, and in 1938 more than 63 per cent of the children aged 11 and over were in reorganised schools. The change has required much careful planning, and more progress has been made in some districts than in others. In country districts it has sometimes been very difficult to decide how existing schools could best be grouped so that a Senior School might be within reach of all. This has usually involved much enlargement and alteration of the particular school chosen to serve as a Senior School, and often the building of a new school altogether. The problem of the dual system also reappeared,

<sup>1</sup> *The Education of the Adolescent*, H.M. Stationery Office.

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since Church School Managers were naturally unwilling to see all their children transferred to a Council Senior School, but the law as it then stood required them to find the money for adapting an existing Church School as a Senior School, or building a new one. This difficulty was got over by the Education Act of 1936, which allowed the L.E.A.s to pay special building grants to Voluntary Schools in such cases. Some of the new Senior Schools being built today are Church Schools, and as much as 75 per cent of the cost may be paid out of State funds.

The new Central or Senior Schools offer a striking contrast to the old type of Elementary School. A large new Senior School may be designed to admit four classes of 40 children annually, and so will need 16 ordinary class-rooms. It will probably have also assembly halls, practical science rooms, art and craft rooms, and geography rooms, all separate for boys and girls. Then there may be two manual rooms for boys and two domestic science rooms with pantries and larders for girls; separate private rooms for Head Master and Head Mistress; separate common rooms for the male and female staff; several additional spare rooms for occasional use, e.g. for medical inspection, temporary sickness, or special extra classes; several store-rooms and ample sanitary accommodation. Equipment will probably include an epidiascope, radio-gramophone, and film projector. In the large towns playing-fields near the school are very difficult to secure, but if the school is in the country or on the outskirts of a town there will be extensive playing-fields for cricket and football for the boys, and hockey, netball, and lawn tennis for the girls.

When this reorganisation is completed the national Elementary School system (educating about 88 per cent of the children between 5 and 15) will be organised as follows :

*Age 2-5.* Nursery school or nursery class (if available. Attendance not compulsory).

*Age 5-7.* Infant School (in the same premises as Junior School in the case of smaller schools).

*Age 7-11.* Junior School.

*Age 11-14 + or 15 +.* Central or Senior School (for those not passing at 11+ into Secondary School).

The Junior School, it will be noted, has come into being through the splitting off first of the Infant School and then of the Senior School from the original type of Elementary School for children of all ages.

## *The State Secondary School System*

Referring to this section of the system, the Board's *Suggestions* adopt a dictum of the Consultative Committee, "The curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored".

Other improvements since 1910 include reduction in the size of classes from 60 to 50 for younger children and 40 for children over 11; an increase of 50 per cent in the proportion of certificated teachers employed; training in handicraft, domestic subjects, and gardening for most of the children instead of relatively few; and a revolution in methods of physical training. Further, the development of secondary education made it possible for more than 80,000 children to pass in 1938 from the Elementary Schools to the Secondary Schools.

What of the 12 per cent, say 650,000 in number, of children of Elementary School age who are not attending Elementary Schools? A certain number will be attending special schools, provided by the L.E.A.s for physically or mentally defective children or "Approved Schools"—the name now given to the Reformatory and Industrial Schools under the control of the Home Office. Some 6500 are in Junior Technical Schools—to be mentioned later. Secondary Schools forming part of the State system account for nearly 245,000. The remainder are in schools outside the State system, chiefly private preparatory schools, private secondary schools for girls, and the great Public Schools.

### 4. THE STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

At the end of the nineteenth century an almost impassable gulf separated the Elementary and the existing Secondary Schools. It has now been much narrowed, and an important report by the Consultative Committee, issued early in 1939 and known, after the name of the Chairman, as the Spens Report, looks forward to a time when it shall be filled in completely. The report recommends that State-aided education should be simplified by according parity of status to all post-primary schools in the State system, whether Secondary Schools, Central and Senior Schools, or Junior Technical Schools. These should all be regarded as giving secondary education of the particular type needed by their pupils, and they would all be administered under new *Secondary School* regulations so that there would no longer be many children of 15 or even 16 in what are officially

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Elementary Schools doing much more advanced work than the younger children in Secondary Schools. As regards premises and teachers' salaries all, it is recommended, should have similar treatment. These proposals, and others which the report contains, especially the reiterated demand for more "realism" in education, are at present greatly exercising the minds of those concerned with education in this country. They cannot, however, be discussed in this pamphlet, which must be restricted to describing and explaining things as they now are.

The starting point of the State system of secondary education was the report, in 1895, of a Royal Commission on Secondary Education with Mr. James Bryce (afterwards Lord Bryce) as Chairman. Its recommendations led both to the establishment of a single Central Authority for Education (the Board of Education) in 1900 and of L.E.A.s with powers to aid education other than elementary in 1902. Certain School Boards, as we have seen, had made unauthorised attempts to provide Higher Grade Schools, and the County and Borough Councils had had some power to aid secondary and technical instruction. But an entirely fresh start was made under the Act of 1902. The new L.E.A.s were active in assisting the old Endowed Schools, many of which were near collapse, and providing new schools. Many of the Higher Grade Schools and institutions for the education of apprentice teachers (pupil teacher centres) became Secondary Schools and so did the numerous rate-aided schools in Wales, leading from the Elementary Schools to the Welsh University Colleges. But the Board of Education, in issuing their first regulations for Secondary Schools in 1904, did not allow recognition to be won too cheaply. They ruled that the education provided must be "general", must extend over at least a full four-year course, and must continue up to and beyond the age of 16. The subjects should include English Language and Literature, History and Geography, at least one Foreign Language, Mathematics and Science. Handicraft for boys, Housewifery for girls, and Physical Training were required. In 1907, to widen the "educational ladder" for the abler Elementary School children, they required that 25 per cent of the pupils should be admitted free from the Elementary Schools, a system which has since been replaced by the "special place" system which grades the fee according to the parents' means. The free place system helped to standardise the age of entry at 12, and later at 11. In 1917 special grants were offered to encourage courses of advanced work for pupils between 16 and 18. Between 1910 and 1935

## *The State Secondary School System*

the average salaries of the teachers were more than doubled, thanks to revised salary scales for both elementary and secondary teachers drawn up before the end of the Great War and known as the "Burnham" scales, and the percentage of teachers with University degrees rose from 54 to 78.

The usual method of admission from the Elementary Schools is for the L.E.A. to examine annually all the local Elementary School pupils between the ages of 11 and 12. "Special places" in the Secondary Schools are offered to those who reach a certain standard. Under some L.E.A.s no children can secure admission without succeeding in this examination, quite irrespective of the parents' ability to pay fees. From £9 : 9s. to £15 : 15s. per annum is the usual fee, but 73 schools charge not more than £6 : 6s., and in the Endowed Schools the fees may be £25 or £30. For boarders the extra fee is from £50 to £70. The Elementary Schools supply 77·6 per cent of the pupils, and this proportion tends to increase; of the 1937-8 entrants 81·3 per cent came from Elementary Schools. Forty-six per cent pay no fees, but 46·6 per cent pay full fees.

A few figures, taken mainly from the Annual Reports of the Board of Education,<sup>1</sup> will help to illustrate the vigorous growth of the State system of secondary education. In 1904 there were 86,000 pupils in average attendance; in 1914 there were 187,000. Very rapid expansion during the War years, due both to the increased income of the working classes and the idealistic spirit of the time, brought the number to 308,000 in 1919. It is now 470,000. In 1904 the total number of schools was 575; it is now 1398. Of these 773 are provided by the L.E.A.s; the remainder consists of 92 Roman Catholic Schools, 430 Endowed and other Schools, and the 103 Welsh Intermediate Schools. In 1907 it was found difficult to keep the pupils after 15 and for more than three years of the four-year course; now the average leaving age is 16½ and the average length of school life almost five years. In 1914 56 out of every 1000 Elementary School children aged between 10 and 11 entered a Secondary School; now 137 per 1000 do so. The total number admitted in 1937-8 was close on 100,000. Girls in particular have benefited, since nearly half the pupils are girls, though before 1902 an Elementary School girl's chances of secondary education were practically nil.

<sup>1</sup> H.M. Stationery Office.

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These figures, as Mr. G. A. N. Lowndes points out in his memorable book *The Silent Social Revolution*,<sup>1</sup> reveal an immense change which in Britain itself is only vaguely perceived. They may not impress those who are familiar with the figures for certain other countries, especially the United States. But secondary education is a relative term : to say that such and such a percentage of the children receive a secondary education means little until we know what is meant by secondary education and also what kind of education is available for the remainder. Many of the Central and Senior Schools are now doing more advanced work than was done by many Secondary Schools before the Great War. The demand in the Spens Report for equality of status for all post-Primary Schools would create at one stroke universal secondary education—at least in name. But an essential feature of the State Secondary Schools is that they do not merely complete the education given in the Elementary Schools but lead up to the Universities, in accordance with the British tradition of secondary education.

The old idea that the Elementary Schools were charity schools for the labouring poor and that secondary education was the privilege of a class, has entirely gone. The patronising language of the Newcastle Report of 1861, which led up to the Act of 1870, seems fantastic today. Its very terms of reference “to consider what measures are required for the extension of sound *and cheap* elementary instruction to all classes of the people”, clash sharply with modern practice and sentiment. Since the Great War the change has become much more rapid. As lately as 1907, as Mr. Lowndes points out,<sup>2</sup> when the grant-aided schools were required to offer 25 per cent of their school places free to children from Elementary Schools, it was assumed that no parent who had sent his child to an Elementary School would be capable of paying Secondary School fees. But now, under the “special place” system the full fee is paid for one-third of the children who come from the Elementary Schools. The State system is, by its own inherent merits, becoming more and more truly national, and is quietly bringing about a continuous growth of national solidarity.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Oxford University Press, 1937. See especially Chapters VI and XI.

<sup>2</sup> *The Silent Social Revolution*, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> See also *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools* (published by the Oxford University Press for the Association for Education in Citizenship).

## *The Public Schools*

### 5. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Outside the State system of secondary education stands that part of the national system which has always aroused most interest abroad—the Public Schools.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to define a Public School. The term “public” as here used does not, of course, mean “State controlled” as it does in “Public Elementary School”. Nor does it mean “open to the public”. It really means “not privately owned but controlled by a Governing Body, in accordance with a Trust or Charter”. The Public Schools are non-local boarding schools for boys, admitting them between 13 and 14 years of age, and keeping them usually till 18 or over. The fees are from £120 to £250 a year. They are independent of State assistance or control, though almost all of them have, at their own request, been inspected by the Board of Education. The masters are almost all graduates of Oxford or Cambridge. For many of the boys the road lies open to Oxford or Cambridge, one of the State services, a profession, or a good business post, but if not they are ready enough to seek their fortunes in any part of the Empire. Eton, Harrow, Winchester, and Rugby are among the most famous Public Schools.

The boys come as a rule from private Preparatory Schools. Practically none come from the Elementary Schools. Though the Public Schools offer entrance scholarships and exhibitions, perhaps from six to ten or twelve annually, worth from £40 to £100 a year, the fees remain heavy even for scholarship winners, the competition for these scholarships is very severe, and the syllabuses of the scholarship examinations with their high standard in Latin, and also the age (13+) at which they are taken, are quite out of keeping with the Elementary School curriculum.

There is no strict dividing line between the Public Schools and the State system. Many of the older Public Schools were originally local “Grammar” Schools : circumstances or the enterprise of an able and vigorous Head Master, such as Thring of Uppingham, have won them their present status. Other local Grammar Schools, originally of the

<sup>1</sup> See also *The English Public Schools*, Darwin (Longmans) ; *The English Tradition of Education*, Norwood (Murray) ; *Life and the Public Schools*, David (Maclehose) ; and the chapter on Education in *England* by Dibelius (English translation published by Jonathan Cape), which treats the whole subject sympathetically from a German viewpoint.

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same type, but now receiving grants from the Board of Education and awarding special places, hang on the fringe of the Public School system, while some ancient foundations now depend entirely on the financial support of the L.E.A.s and are almost indistinguishable from L.E.A. schools.

What is known as the "public school tradition" really dates from the middle of the nineteenth century. Though the nine typical schools which were reported on in 1864 by the Public Schools Commission were almost all founded before the end of the sixteenth century, they had since fallen on evil days, and it was not until the time of the famous Dr. Arnold, Head Master of Rugby, that the Public Schools acquired their most marked characteristics. At the same time the increase of wealth and the development of railways led to the foundation of many new Public Schools. Wellington, Marlborough, and Clifton belong to this period.

The well-known book *Tom Brown's School Days* gives some idea of what Rugby was like in Arnold's time. He found the boys idle and quite out of control, and set himself to organise school life. His chief method was to give definite powers to the members of the highest class, the Sixth Form, who were known as Praepostors. Himself an intensely religious man, he told his praepostors that what he looked for was—first, religious and moral principles; secondly, gentlemanly conduct; thirdly, intellectual ability. Nothing distressed him more than any weakness or misconduct in the Sixth. "You should feel", he said, "like officers in the army or navy, whose want of moral courage would indeed be thought cowardice." And again, "if the Sixth do not support me, I must go".

Arnold supported the system of fagging which remains today a special feature of the Public Schools. Under this system a Prefect, as he is now usually called, can require boys in the middle or lower school to run errands for him, clean and tidy his study, brush his clothes, and so forth. Prefects may also inflict corporal punishment. Arnold defended fagging as "the power given by the supreme authorities of the school to the Sixth Form, for the sake of securing a regular government amongst the boys themselves, and avoiding the evils of anarchy, in other words of the lawless tyranny of physical strength". The Public School boy does not resent being fagged or caned by a prefect, and former fag and fagmaster, meeting in later life, find amusement in recalling the old relationship, especially if

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the one has become eminent while the other has remained obscure.

Public School buildings have been vastly improved in the present century, especially as regards science laboratories, workshops, and gymnasiums. But here and there some ill-designed buildings which would not be tolerated in a L.E.A. school still survive, a legacy from early days, and many well-known Public Schools might look with envy on some of the modern L.E.A. school premises. Most Public Schools have extensive playing-fields, and sometimes gardens and woods of their own ; the recently founded school, Canford, has almost an acre per boy. Near the main school buildings will be the various Houses in which the boys live ; about thirty or forty to a House. All but the youngest boys generally have separate studies. In certain schools, e.g. Wellington, the dormitory system is adopted ; a corridor runs along the middle of a long oblong building and on either side are small separate rooms, divided by wooden partitions, in which the boys sleep and do their private study. Centrally placed, if possible, there will be the school chapel, library, and gymnasium, and dotted about the school grounds one may note music school, racket, fives, and squash courts, games pavilion, engineering workshop, confectioner's shop, swimming-bath, and swimming-pool.

As is well known, games play an important part in the life of the average school boy. Cricket, football, and (if there is a river) rowing are the highest in repute. Hockey is becoming very popular. To take part in these games is generally compulsory. Among other sports are boxing, fencing, swimming, cross-country running. In all these there are inter-House and inter-School matches, and boys are very keen to be included in House or School teams. It is sometimes said that the typical Public School boy thinks of little else but games. Certainly he looks up with awe and veneration to the heroes of the Cricket XI and Football XV, but the public receive a one-sided impression of Public School life from the daily press, which gives detailed accounts of the athletic events while the intellectual interests cannot, of course, have any news value. However, it is all to the good that team games have taken the place of the loafing, drinking, bullying, or playing with tops, kites, or marbles of bygone years. They play an important part in teaching self-control and building up a corporate spirit.

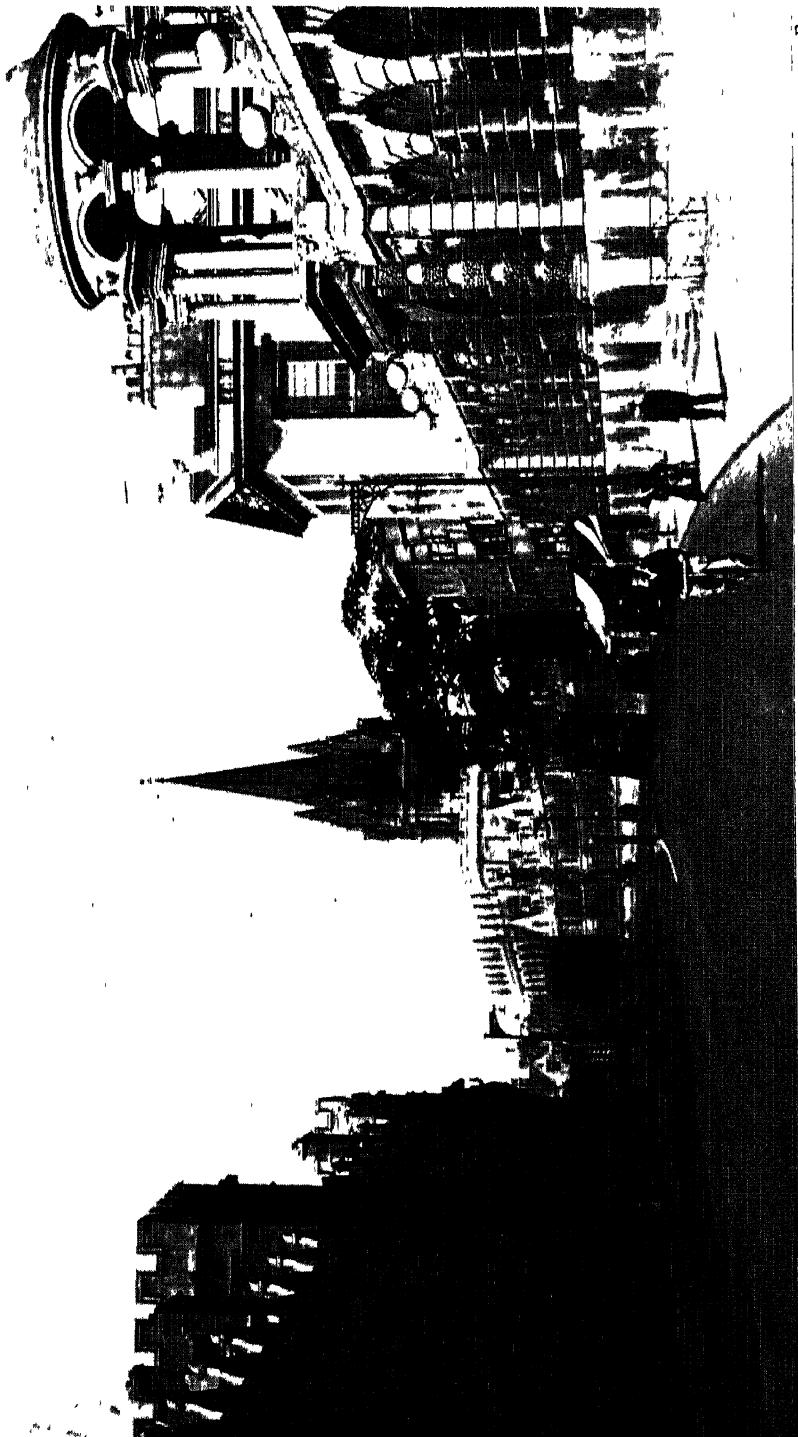
Critics who complain that the curriculum of the Public Schools is antiquated and quite out of touch with reality do not realise the

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great changes that have taken place in them in modern times. In Arnold's time Latin and Greek were the only subjects thought worthy of study : the teaching of any others was often a mere farce. Today the study of the classics is still artificially encouraged by certain examination requirements, especially the scholarship awards at Oxford and Cambridge ; but it is not forced upon any boy, and such subjects as History, Modern Languages, and Natural Science have full recognition. The Public Schools have richly participated in the quickening of intellectual life which has taken place in recent years. Members of the staff of the Public Schools are conspicuous in originating new ideas in education and the overhauling of aims and methods. The prospects and salaries which they can offer secure them first-rate men as masters, and nowhere in Britain is better teaching given than in the great Public Schools.

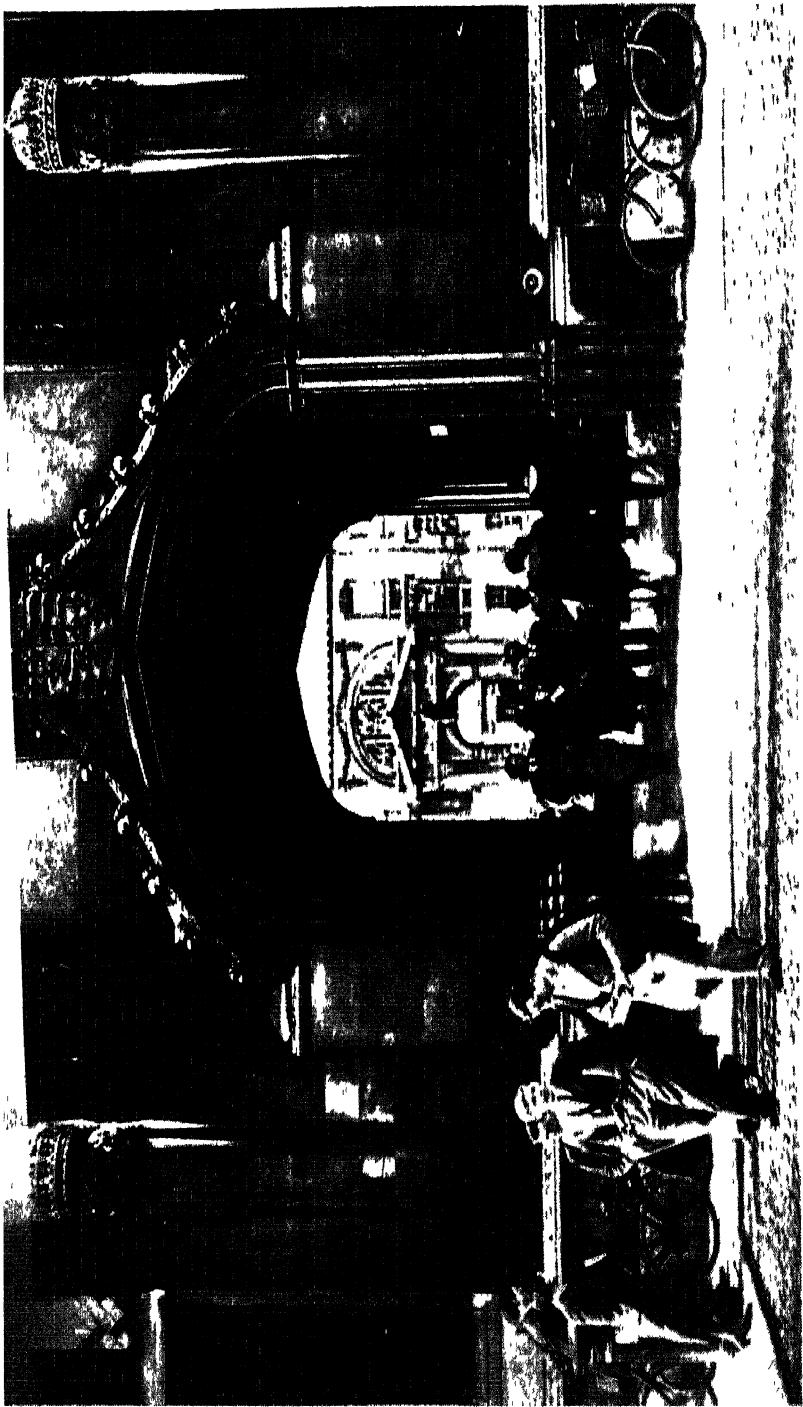
The two different types of school, the State-controlled Secondary School and the independent Public School, have gradually approached each other and the bounds which separate them constantly become less marked. As regards curriculum there is now little difference between them, and the State Schools have adopted many of the Public School methods of building up a corporate spirit, such as the Prefect system, the House system, compulsory games, school colours, school societies, speech days, Old Pupils' Associations. They divide their pupils into "Forms", not "classes", and some have even borrowed Form names such as "Shell" and "Remove" originally peculiar to particular Public Schools. Former Elementary School boys who have passed through L.E.A. schools may be found as Masters in the great Public Schools. An increasing number of parents belonging to the professional classes recognise the efficiency of the State schools and send their sons and still more their daughters to them, though others make great financial sacrifices to send a son to a well-known Public School. The transport facilities provided by the motor-omnibus and motor-car have brought good town State schools within the reach of many country dwellers for whom a boarding school would once have been a necessity.

But the great Public Schools do form a distinct group, their critics call them a class preserve, and that, for good or ill, they tend to keep social classes apart, is undeniable. Their critics also say that they destroy individuality : their admirers claim that they produce a well-defined and admirable type of character. That they produce a certain



High Street, Oxford

Rox



Cambridge : Undergraduates leaving King's College

*Herbert Fellow*

The Technical College, Walthamstow, Essex





The King's Camp at Abergele. The King has for a number of years taken a great interest in this holiday camp for public and elementary schoolboys. He is here seen taking part in a sing-song. Seated in the front row are (from left to right), Princess Elizabeth, the Camp Commandant, the King, the Queen, and Princess Margaret

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type is undoubtedly true : the question how they do it is not very easy to answer. It is important to remember the influence of the home as well as that of the school. The boys come from homes which may or may not be intellectual, but in which the background of life is richer and more varied than in the average home : they have had plenty of opportunity for experiences and amusements that cost money ; travel, riding, motoring, sailing, visits to theatres, and so forth. In their homes they will hear matters discussed from the point of view of the leaders of local society, not from that of the tradesman or artisan, and they tend to think of themselves as privileged persons who can take the lead and are expected to do so. At school they retain a self-confident outlook on the world in general, but they also find their level and recognise their superiors. A Public School does not make a boy more arrogant : it makes him more modest. School public opinion, though it has, of course, its narrow side, enforces respect for such qualities as loyalty, a sense of fairness, the habit of co-operation, readiness for responsibility. Arnold's biographer wrote in 1845 : "He found a system which distinguishes the English public school system from almost every other system of education in Europe and depends on the fact that a large number of boys are left for a large portion of their time to form an independent society of their own in which the influence that they exercise over each other is far greater than can possibly be exercised by the masters".<sup>1</sup> Arnold's aim was to direct that influence. Dr. Moberly at the close of his head-mastership of Winchester in 1866 wrote : "There grows for the most part upon young men bred at public schools a facility of using their powers, an easy skill in taking and keeping their position in life, an absence of absurd pretension, a general practical modesty, a self-reliance and moral presence of mind, a good sense, an early maturity of practical judgment, which are of unspeakable value in all the conduct of their lives".<sup>2</sup> In spite of the great changes which the Public School has seen and experienced since then, this statement might have been written today. The type that the Public Schools are producing today is the same as the type that they were producing long ago, and the inference is that it represents something deep down in the British character. Whatever may be thought of it, it is essentially British.

<sup>1</sup> *Arnold's Life and Correspondence*, Stanley, Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup> From Preface to *Winchester Sermons*.

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The Preparatory Schools are an essential part of the Public School system. There are numerous small private day schools for boys and girls who proceed later to Elementary or State Secondary Schools. But the schools which prepare for the Public Schools or the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth are quite distinct from these. As a rule they are boarding schools, and the boys enter at 8 or 9 years of age. They are private ventures, the proprietors are generally Oxford or Cambridge graduates, and so are most of the assistants in the best known schools. They depend entirely on the fees paid, so that these are necessarily high, almost as high as those in the Public Schools.

For admission to the Public Schools boys have to pass what is known as the Common Entrance examination, and to secure his boys' success in this is one of the chief concerns of the "Prep" school Head Master. Its effect on the "Prep" school curriculum and methods of teaching is one of the educational questions most under discussion today. There is also keen competition at the "Prep" schools for the entrance scholarships or exhibitions awarded annually by the various Public Schools.

Preparatory Schools are situated chiefly in the country or at seaside resorts. There are many on the south coast of England; places like Brighton and Eastbourne are full of them. They are under no kind of external control, but most of them have, at their own request, been visited by Inspectors of the Board of Education. They aim at preparing their boys to fit easily and naturally into the Public School system, and are themselves Public Schools in miniature. Games are taken seriously, and the boys are generally well coached in cricket and football. They are well cared for and have a happy time; the relations between them and the masters are very natural and friendly. The "Prep" schools are a much later development than the Public Schools: few of them date back further than 1870.

The outstanding point as regards the secondary education of girls is that there are now 222,600 girls in the grant-aided Secondary Schools as against some 33,000 in 1902. The new schools provided by the L.E.A.s are mostly separate for boys and girls, but there are also many mixed schools. There is no Public School system for girls corresponding to that for boys, though there are a few schools which may be called Girls' Public Schools, such as Cheltenham Ladies College with over 500 boarders, Wycombe Abbey School with 320, and Roedean with some 280. Instead there are numerous private boarding schools,

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usually taking from 50 to 100 girls. Some of these charge very high fees. There are also many private day schools for girls, charging perhaps £25 or £30 a year. Anyone in England can start a private school, and such schools spring up to meet any kind of demand. There are also many Convent Schools for girls.

Voluntary effort was forthcoming in the middle of the nineteenth century to improve the education of women. Through the enthusiasm of such pioneers as Miss Buss, Miss Beale, and Miss Davies, the Girls' Public Day School Company was founded in 1872 and provided High Schools for girls in many of the large towns : a good many Endowed Schools for girls were also founded before the end of the century. These schools are now State-aided. The Association of Head Mistresses was founded by Miss Buss in 1874. At the outset those who demanded a real education for women sought to secure for girls the same curriculum as that of the boys' schools. This they regarded as a corollary of women's claim for the recognition of their intellectual equality with men. A Report of the Consultative Committee in 1923 on the Curricula appropriate to Boys' and Girls' Schools urged that recognition of equality does not necessarily involve identity of treatment. With this view the representatives of the girls' schools have not disagreed.

The Universities conduct an examination known as the School Certificate Examination, which is designed to test the work of Secondary Schools at the Fifth Form stage when the pupils should be about 16 years of age. It is not compulsory, but it is taken by practically all Secondary Schools, the independent as well as the State-aided. Passing it affords evidence that the "general" stage of secondary education, previous to specialisation, has been satisfactorily completed. At present the regulations make it a condition for obtaining a Certificate that a candidate shall pass in five subjects altogether, and in at least one subject from each of three groups, (i) English subjects, (ii) Modern Languages, (iii) Mathematics or Science. Various practical and aesthetic subjects such as Music, Art, and Domestic Science, form a group (iv), but a pass in one of these is not essential. Further, if a candidate reaches the "credit" as distinct from the "pass" standard in five subjects, he may be entitled to a "Matriculation" Certificate, qualifying him for admission to a University. Much discussion ranges round these regulations at present, and the Consultative Committee have expressed the opinion that they exert too much influence on the

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school curriculum, that greater freedom in choice of subjects should be allowed, and that the use of the School Certificate for matriculation purposes should be abolished.<sup>1</sup>

The Universities also conduct a Higher Certificate Examination, for which the normal preparation is two years in the Sixth Form after passing the School Certificate Examination. State scholarships to the Universities are awarded on the results of the Higher Certificate. These scholarships have a maximum value of £100 a year and 360 were awarded in 1938.

### 6. THE UNIVERSITIES

#### (a) *Oxford and Cambridge*

The Universities belong essentially to the "voluntary" portion of the national system. They are in no sense provided by the State, but were created through the generosity of various founders and benefactors. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge date from the twelfth century, but the ten other Universities of England and Wales are modern, the oldest, Durham, dating from 1832.

An essential characteristic of Oxford and Cambridge is the fact that the students are housed in Colleges, and are under definite supervision there. This system dates from the foundation of the oldest College—Merton College, Oxford—in 1264. There are now 24 Colleges at Oxford and 18 at Cambridge : of these 12 at Oxford and 11 at Cambridge were founded before the year 1500. Trinity College, Cambridge, with more than 650 students, is by far the largest College at either University. At both Oxford and Cambridge there are groups of non-collegiate students organised as Societies with a corporate life of their own. There are about 4000 students in residence at Oxford and rather more at Cambridge.

The Universities and the Colleges of which they are composed are both of them self-governing, and subject to no external control except that of Parliament, which has intervened on various occasions, notably in the second half of the nineteenth century when two Royal Commissions and several Acts of Parliament brought about important changes, which were welcomed by a large body of opinion in the Universities themselves. The University was at one time not much more than a name for the Colleges taken collectively, but modern conditions have increased its importance. In particular the growth

<sup>1</sup> *Secondary Education* (Spens Report), Chapter VII (H.M. Stationery Office).

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of scientific studies has created a demand for laboratories and equipment which the separate Colleges could not supply. The Colleges now have to pay about 12 per cent of their income to the University, but the latter has no authority over the discipline within the walls of a College nor over the teaching provided by a College. But in practice difficulties seldom arise, since the University officials and the College authorities are so often the same persons. The Vice-chancellor, who is in practice the Head of the University, is appointed from among the Heads of Colleges and holds office for two or for three years. The University, as distinct from the Colleges, examines and grants degrees, and the professors are University officers, though they are often attached to particular Colleges.

On first coming up, as a freshman, the student has rooms in his College allotted to him. Rent and size of rooms vary, but as a rule he has a comfortable sitting-room and separate bedroom. He arranges with his tutor what course of studies he will follow and what lectures he will attend. Each College has its own staff of lecturers but lectures at any one College are open to members of all the rest. Some are crowded, others sparsely attended, according to the lecturer's degree of popularity. The year is divided into three terms of only eight weeks each : the long vacation lasts from mid-June till mid-October. A student who takes his work seriously will probably read or attend lectures from 9 or 9.30 till the midday meal (lunch) at 1, then take vigorous exercise of some sort on the playing-fields or the river till tea at about 4.30 or 5, then do some more work till dinner taken either in College Hall or at a restaurant in the town, at 7, and after dinner, perhaps attend a meeting of some College Society, or spend a social evening with friends or get some more reading done. Once a week, at least, he will spend an hour with his tutor, who will criticise and discuss his work. This personal association of tutor and student in "tutorials" is another special characteristic of Oxford and Cambridge, and the community life of a College often leads to very close and friendly relations between "dons" (a general name for all the officers of the University) and students.

It is difficult for a student to manage on less than about £250 a year if he is to play a normal part in the social side of University life and not to forgo many of the organised student activities which give residence at Oxford or Cambridge its special flavour and value. In some cases the strictest economy must be practised, but a promising

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student may hold a College scholarship, a State scholarship, and perhaps a Leaving scholarship provided by his school or a grant from the Local Education Authority, and by such means even a very poor man may have his full share of University life.

Genuine industry is of course expected from scholarship holders and exhibitioners, and they secure most of the "first classes". The great majority of ordinary students (commoners) also read for "Honours" degrees. But there are many other fields besides the "Schools" in which interests may be followed up and distinction won. The Union Debating Societies at Oxford and Cambridge are justly famous : many distinguished British Parliamentarians have gained their early laurels there. While one man's chief ambition may be to gain academic success, that of another may be to make a mark at the Union, to shine in the Dramatic Society, or to win a "blue". The man who represents Oxford or Cambridge at any important form of sport can wear, at Oxford the dark blue, at Cambridge the light. The greatest prestige is attached to the rowing, cricket, and rugby football blues. Eights week is a great occasion at both Oxford and Cambridge. The rowing "eights" representing the various Colleges are stationed about 65 feet apart, from stern to bow, and each boat tries to "bump" the one in front, *i.e.* to touch some part of it with its own bow. The boat which has made the bump starts next day in front of the one which has been bumped and the final order is determined by the result of six days' racing. The Oxford and Cambridge Dramatic Societies are also famous. They take the local theatre for a week each year, and the standard of the performances is very high.

There are two Colleges for women at Cambridge and four at Oxford. The oldest is Girton College, Cambridge, which dates from 1873. Women may enter for University examinations and prizes on the same terms as men. A woman has been placed above the Senior Wrangler at Cambridge, thus showing herself the most brilliant mathematician of her year, and the Newdigate prize at Oxford for English verse has in recent years been won several times by women. Since 1920 Oxford has granted degrees to women, but Cambridge only confers "titles of Degrees"; that is, the examiners may state that a woman has reached the standard required for a degree but she cannot actually call herself a graduate. Women students at Cambridge are limited to 500.

The ancient Universities afford unique opportunities for the pursuit

## *The Universities*

of all branches of learning and research, and they secure each year the most brilliant of the pupils leaving the Secondary Schools. But old students of Oxford and Cambridge think of them not merely as places of learning. As in the Public Schools, the students to a great extent educate themselves. The College system and the community life, the Clubs and Societies, and the intimate personal contacts provide an environment of thought and inquiry in which, at the most impressionable period of life, minds are broadened and enriched.

It is sometimes supposed, not only abroad but in Britain as well, that Oxford and Cambridge are class preserves from which privileged persons, with manners and mode of speech of their own, enter the liberal professions or the service of the State, take orders in the Church of England, or settle down to a cultivated leisure. Any such picture is misleading. It is true that they have in the past been strongholds of conservatism and the Anglican Church, that it was not until 1871 that all tests excluding non-conformists were removed at Oxford, that residence is expensive and that exclusive sets exist at some of the richer Colleges. In a sense they are still very conservative places : their forms, customs, and procedure constantly reproduce the Middle Ages. But they are the home of new as well as of traditional ideas, and they reflect many of the changes that have occurred since the beginning of the century. They were then quite out of touch with the Elementary Schools, as the great Public Schools are still. But in 1937, of the 762 open scholarships and exhibitions awarded at Oxford and Cambridge, more than 30 per cent were won by former pupils of Public Elementary Schools. Nearly 40 per cent of the students receive help from some public fund or other. Political opinion among the students is now much less stereotyped, as may be seen from the voting at the Union debates. The older Universities now represent all classes not only of Britain but the Empire, and many students come from foreign countries. University athletic teams nowadays often seem like Empire or even international teams. Thus, of the twelve players taking part in the Oxford *versus* Cambridge Lawn Tennis Match in 1939 four only came from English schools, five from the overseas Empire, and the rest from three different foreign countries. The London *Times* for 5th May, 1939, says, "The extent to which the old academic walls have been broken down, and Oxford as a seat of learning is connected with life outside itself, not only national but international, is significantly marked by two appointments"—those

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of Professor Chen Yin-Koh as Professor of Chinese, and a Canadian Rhodes Scholar from Toronto as Dean of Christ Church. Through the Rhodes scholarships Oxford includes nearly 200 picked students from the Empire and the United States and, until the outbreak of the present war, two annually from Germany. Over the names of three former German students on a memorial tablet in the chapel of New College the following inscription may be read : " In memory of the men of this College who coming from a foreign land entered into the inheritance of this place and returning fought and died for their country in the war 1914-19".

### *(b) The Modern Universities*

For more than six hundred years Oxford and Cambridge remained the only English Universities and then, in the course of less than a hundred years, ten more were created. The growth of the industrial system and the great social changes of the nineteenth century led to increased demand, especially in the great cities, for opportunities for further education. University College, London, was founded in 1826, as a non-sectarian College to provide University training for non-conformists who were at that time excluded from Oxford and Cambridge. The Church party replied by founding King's College in 1829 as a Church College. The religious rivalry made it impossible for the two Colleges to be combined into a single University, and when London University was created in 1836 it was simply as an Examining Board which in 1858 threw its degrees open to any applicant, wherever educated, who could pass the examiners' tests. But separate examinations are now held for " internal " students who have studied at any of the various London Colleges, about 40 in all, which are recognised as " Schools of the University ". These include, e.g., the Imperial College of Science and Technology, Bedford and Queen's Colleges for Women, and the medical schools of the great hospitals. London University has nearly 10,000 students and more than 1000 of these come from the Dominions overseas.

The typical history of the modern Universities has been first the foundation, through the generosity of one or more private persons, of a College designed to teach chiefly scientific and technical subjects to the population of a great industrial town ; then its expansion by the addition of a medical school, " faculties " (departments of study) in the humane subjects, and a department for the training of teachers,

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and finally the securing of a Royal Charter, constituting the College (or a group of Colleges) a University entitled to grant its own degrees. Instances of such Colleges are Owens College, Manchester, and Mason College, Birmingham, both named after their founders. These and several others were founded in the course of the nineteenth century, and at the end of the century the process of their conversion into Universities began. In 1893 four separate Colleges in different parts of Wales became the University of Wales, and between 1900 and 1926 Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Bristol, and Reading received their charters. Nottingham, Southampton, Exeter, and Hull are still at the University College stage. The development of secondary education since the Act of 1902 has of course had a great influence on the growth of Universities.

The modern Universities differ in several respects from Oxford and Cambridge. They are not entirely self-governing, as their "Councils" include representatives of outside bodies as well as University teachers. They draw most of their students from their own locality and, being non-resident, they cannot develop a common student life in the way that the older Universities do, though in the case of students living in hostels and participating in sports and other activities this is by no means lacking. Nor can they adopt the tutorial system. Unlike Oxford and Cambridge the modern Universities, since London granted degrees to women in 1878, have made no distinction in their treatment of men and women students.

The traditional British idea of the function of a University is that the advancement of learning for its own sake should be its dominant aim. But through their work in the applied sciences, as well as through their departments for the training of teachers, the Universities contribute much to the supply of definite professional training. The modern Universities, situated as they are in great industrial towns, have naturally gone much further than Oxford and Cambridge in satisfying demands for technical instruction. London, Birmingham, and Manchester award "Commerce" degrees, and Brewery and Textiles have become University studies at Birmingham and Leeds.

The cost of attendance at the modern non-residential Universities is much less than that of being a member of an Oxford or Cambridge College, even for those students who do not live at home. The number of students who receive some assistance towards their expenses is not much larger than the number so assisted at Oxford and Cambridge.

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All the Universities alike are independent of the State and subject to no control by the Board of Education or the Local Authorities. Though Parliament now grants an annual sum of nearly £2,000,000 to the Universities, and the Local Authorities also pay grants to the Universities in their areas, in neither case are conditions laid down about the expenditure of the sums granted.<sup>1</sup>

### 7. TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Under this heading we may consider a rather complex system of vocational and general courses of instruction almost all provided by the L.E.A.s under the Board of Education *Regulations for Further Education*.

Great Britain was slower than the Continent to realise that systematic technical education had become a necessary condition of industrial efficiency. The Science and Art Department, created in 1856, subsidised the teaching of Science with a view to aiding industry, and the City and Guilds of London Institute, founded in 1878, conducted examinations in Technology and granted Certificates. The recently founded University Colleges were also providing teaching of applied science. But it was not until 1889 that expenditure upon technical education out of local rates was authorised by Act of Parliament. Between 1890 and 1900 many Technical School buildings were provided by the Local Authorities (then the Technical Instruction Committees of the County Councils) or transferred to them. Under the Education Act of 1902 the new L.E.A.s became responsible for the Evening Continuation Schools (previously a form of elementary education provided by School Boards or Voluntary School Managers) as well as the Technical Schools. The L.E.A.s concentrated at first on building up a system of secondary education, but since 1918 much has been done to develop technical education, and its problems have been investigated by several important Government Committees, such as the Committee on Education for Salesmanship which reported in 1931. There are now about 150 Technical Colleges and Schools distributed

<sup>1</sup> For further account of the Universities see *Universities in Great Britain*, Ernest Barker (Student Christian Movement Press, 1931); *The Life of a Modern University*, edited by Hugh Martin (Student Christian Movement Press, 1930); *The British Universities*, Sir Charles Grant Robertson (Ernest Benn, 1930); *Oxford University Handbook* (Oxford University Press); *Students' Handbook to Cambridge* (Cambridge University Press).

## *Technical Education*

rather unevenly among the important towns. Lancashire has 24; West Yorkshire 13. They vary greatly in their history and the scope of their work. Among Colleges recently provided are two built by the Essex L.E.A. on the outskirts of London, each accommodating 1000 full-time and 4000 evening students. Each comprises, in a single building, Secondary School with technical bias for boys and girls, Technical College and School of Art. However, the Board of Education, in their report for 1938, state that "the provision of satisfactory accommodation for technical education is one of the most pressing needs of the present time".

The Schools and Courses recognised under the Regulations for Further Education may be classified as follows :

(1) *Junior Technical Schools*, with which may be grouped Junior Commercial and Junior Housewifery Schools and the six Schools of Nautical Training. They were originally full-time day technical classes, but the Board has recognised them as a distinct type of school since 1913. (Usually they receive their pupils from the Elementary Schools at 13 or 14 but the Spens Report, which would classify them as Secondary Schools, recommends that they should admit their pupils at 11+, a recommendation which was anticipated in the schools of the two new Essex Technical Colleges, the idea being that otherwise the Secondary and Selective Central Schools would get all the best pupils.) There are 230 Junior Technical Schools, spread over the industrial and urban areas of England and Wales. They contain about 30,000 pupils, who stay till 16 or sometimes 17, and they provide a general education with a technical bias. A school preparing, e.g. for the engineering and metal working trades, might give 5 hours weekly to English subjects, 6 to Mathematics, 6 to Science, 4 to Technical Drawing, 1 to Art and 6 to Workshop Practice. Junior Art Departments also prepare some 2500 pupils for employment in artistic industries. In London there are also some schools, known as Trade Schools, preparing pupils for a particular trade by means of workshop practice.

(2) *Junior Evening Classes*. These are really the Continuation Schools already mentioned and are also called Junior Evening Institutes. They are usually held in elementary school buildings and extend over two years, from 14 to 16. Attendance is for about six hours a week on three evenings from September to March or April, and the chief subjects are English, Mathematics and Physical Exercises,

## *British Education*

with preliminary technical, commercial, or domestic training. These classes form the main means of dealing with a serious problem of British education, the 360,000 children who annually leave the Elementary Schools, on reaching the exemption age of 14, under no legal compulsion to continue their education in any way. About 37 per cent of them join one of these Classes, though unfortunately some 30 per cent of these have dropped out by the end of the first year. But the development of Senior (Elementary) Schools which is now proceeding should make it less necessary for the Junior Evening Classes to provide general education as a basis for technical instruction.

(3) *Day Continuation Schools.* These schools afford a more satisfactory method of continuing elementary school education. The Education Act of 1918 made attendance at Day Continuation Schools compulsory, but circumstances prevented the coming into operation of this part of the Act. However, there are some 40 schools of this type with a voluntary attendance of nearly 20,000, half of whom are under 15. Attendance depends upon arrangement with employers to allow "time off" from work. Some business firms provide "Works Schools" for their own young employees.

(4) *Senior and Advanced Evening Classes.* These may be regarded as the chief means of technical and further general education. They are held in day-school premises and Technical Colleges and are attended by nearly 900,000 students over 16. General subjects include Foreign Languages, Social Sciences, Music, etc.: Adult Education, to be considered in Section 8, is also concerned with teaching of this type. More than 200,000 students attend the 10,000 classes provided for the engineering and metal trades. There are also more than 55,000 students attending part-time at Art Schools and Classes.

(5) *Technical Day Classes.* These contain some 34,000 students, most of whom are allowed time off by their employers. It is a defect of the British system, as compared with what is usual on the Continent and in the U.S.A., that the bulk of the technical instruction is given in the evenings. The worker anxious to improve his qualifications and his prospects voluntarily gives up his spare time to study when his day's work is done. Each evening the Technical Colleges are filled with students, but during the day they may be, to a great extent, unused. But it is now recognised that more day-time training, involving time off for the worker on certain days and half-days, is desirable. The number of students attending day courses has risen by nearly

## *Adult Education*

5000 since 1932, the increase being mainly in the engineering courses.

(6) *Senior Full-Time Courses.* These are conducted in many of the larger Technical Colleges and Schools of Art. They extend over two years and are attended by students between 16 and 19, a large proportion of whom have been educated in Secondary Schools. In the year 1937-8 there were 376 technical and commercial courses of this type, conducted in 81 Colleges and attended by more than 9000 full-time students, while nearly 5000 students over 16 were attending Art Schools and Classes full-time. Many aim at obtaining University Degrees or National Certificates.

There is no uniform system of examinations in technical subjects. In certain compact areas regional examination bodies, such as the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes, have been established; in others, where the schools are more scattered, examinations are organised by Societies, such as the Royal Society of Arts, which are concerned with particular subjects. In the scheme for the award of "National Certificates" the Board of Education co-operates with professional Institutions, e.g. the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. There were more than 7600 candidates for these Certificates in 1938, an increase of 1000 compared with the previous year. Some of them are comparable in value to a University degree in Science.

It is essential that there should be close co-operation between the Technical Schools and local employers of industry. For this purpose L.E.A.s have established Advisory Committees in connection with the work of the various departments of the Technical Colleges. In Yorkshire there is a Committee for Further Education which aims at co-ordinating technical instruction throughout the county. Numerous professional, industrial and commercial Associations are now interesting themselves in questions of vocational training from a national point of view.

### 8. ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education is designed to give liberal education, as distinct from technical and vocational instruction, to persons of not less than 18 years of age. The demand comes from the growing number who have become aware of the existence of a heritage of knowledge and realise that they are debarred through ignorance from sharing the interests and recreations which are enriching the lives of others around them. The movement received a great impetus during the Great War

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through the striking success of the schemes of education organised for the troops on active service. These started as a voluntary movement in 1917, the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) being particularly active. In January 1919 almost 1,000,000 members of the Expeditionary Forces were attending tutorial classes, lectures, and concerts under the scheme approved by the Army Council for educational training in the army.

In the provision of adult education the L.E.A.s and a number of voluntary bodies work harmoniously together. Of the voluntary bodies those principally concerned are the Universities and the Workers' Educational Association (W.E.A.). The interest of the Universities dates from 1873 when Extension courses were first provided by Cambridge University. Now all the Universities have Extra-mural Departments or special Committees for organising Extension work in their areas, and they appoint Directors of Extra-mural Studies and a staff of Extension tutors. The Universities, the W.E.A., and the L.E.A.s co-operate not merely by means of Joint Committees but through carefully planned local schemes which vary in the different areas and counties. The W.E.A. lays special emphasis on the development of the social consciousness of the ordinary citizen and on those studies which help the workers to relate their personal experience of industrial and local problems to a wider knowledge and understanding of human affairs. It has 600 branches, and organising tutors in almost every county in England. It is very active not only in providing classes but in awakening interest and stimulating demand. Among other voluntary bodies assisting in the provision of adult education are the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, which have both educational and religious aims, the County Federation of Women's Institutes, the Rural Community Councils, the various social settlements affiliated to the Educational Settlements Association, and the British Drama League. The Men's Institutes provided by the London Education Authority aim at encouraging a rational employment of leisure by those to whom the usual forms of education do not appeal.

The L.E.A.s assist with grants and themselves provide, under the Regulations for Further Education, many non-vocational courses. The Board of Education, under their Adult Education Regulations, pay grants direct to the Universities, the W.E.A., and certain other "Responsible Bodies" for courses which satisfy their requirements.

## *The Supply of Teachers*

The classes and courses are of widely different types : on the one hand there are short courses of small groups of students, study circles, and groups of listeners to British Broadcasting Company Educational Talks ; on the other Three-Year Tutorial Classes and Advanced Tutorial Classes conducted by Universities, and courses at a Workers' Residential College, such as Ruskin College, Oxford, all doing work of the standard of University work in Honours.

In the year ended 31st July, 1938, 3000 courses of various kinds were conducted under the Adult Education Regulations. They were attended by 58,000 pupils. The most popular subjects are Literature and Language, Economics, Sociology, Philosophy, and Psychology.<sup>1</sup>

### 9. THE SUPPLY OF TEACHERS

The training of teachers, like the provision of schools, was begun by voluntary agencies. The National Society and other religious Societies which were active in providing schools soon realised the necessity of providing qualified teachers for them, and founded residential Training Colleges in different parts of the country. The Education Department assisted with grants and awarded the Teacher's Certificate to those who passed the prescribed tests.

After 1890 Universities were authorised to establish Training Departments in which intending teachers could obtain a degree as well as the Certificate. The Act of 1902 enabled the L.E.A.s to build Colleges of their own which, of course, were undenominational in contrast to the earlier Colleges. In 1926 the Board of Education ceased to conduct the examination for the Certificate and handed it over to Regional Boards on which the Training Colleges, the Universities, and the L.E.A.s were all represented.

There are now 74 Training Colleges, of which 51 are voluntary foundations. They provide, normally, a two-year course up to the Teacher's Certificate. In the University Training Departments the students usually spend three years in working for a degree and then one year in professional training. Those who secure good Honours degrees are usually appointed to Secondary Schools ; the others go to Elementary Schools.

<sup>1</sup> See also *The Scope and Practice of Adult Education* (H.M. Stationery Office, 1937) ; *Board of Education Regulations for Adult Education* (H.M. Stationery Office) ; *Adult Education in Practice*, Peers (Macmillan, 1934) ; *Learn and Live*, Williams and Heath (Methuen).

## *British Education*

The total number of teachers in Elementary Schools is about 145,000, of whom 115,800 are certificated. Under the "Burnham" scales agreed upon by a Salaries Committee originally appointed during the Great War, the average salary of men and women certificated teachers is about £334 and £254 respectively. The Board of Education formerly made definite rules about the number and qualifications of the teachers employed in these schools, but they now content themselves with saying that the L.E.A.s must satisfy the Board on this point. In practice the L.E.A.s have working scales of their own, regulating the staff required for schools of different types and sizes. In Secondary Schools these scales generally require one teacher for every 18, 19, or 20 pupils, with extra teachers in schools which have large Sixth Forms split up into several groups for specialised work. The Board have never made rules about the qualifications of teachers in Secondary Schools but they satisfy themselves, through their system of inspection, that the staffs of all schools aided from public funds are sufficient and suitable in number and quality.

Actually the proportion of certificated teachers in the Elementary Schools constantly increases. In the grant-aided Secondary Schools the teachers have generally had a course of training in a University Training Department after taking their degrees. But the great Public Schools attach more importance to personality than training in appointing their staffs.<sup>1</sup>

### 10. EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL-ROOM

Education Authorities and teachers attach increasing importance to out-of-school activities. Almost every school has numerous school Societies in which boys and girls pursue their own interests and hobbies. School journeys, visits to important industrial works, and exchange visits between British and foreign school pupils, are often arranged. In 1937 the Government introduced a scheme for the development of opportunities for recreation and physical training. The larger schools keep in touch with former pupils by means of Old Pupils' Societies, and Parents' Associations are a means of linking the school influence with that of the home. There are many voluntary societies, clubs, and guilds for young people which often have a decisive influence in stimulating their minds or moulding their

<sup>1</sup> See *The Training of Teachers* (National Union of Teachers, 1939).

## *Scotland*

characters. Conspicuous among these are the Boy Scouts, now a vast international organisation arranging every four years an international camp in which Scouts of all nations meet. The Girl Guides is a companion organisation. There is a National Association of Boys' Clubs to which 850 clubs are affiliated, and a National Council of Girls' Clubs. Other Associations with large membership are the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, and the junior departments of the Y.M.C.A. But the voluntary enterprises which seek to provide educational experiences for young people are far too numerous for separate mention. King George VI maintains the personal interest which he showed as Duke of York in the King's Camp for Boys from the Public Schools and from industry, and his example has done much to make camping popular. The School Empire-Tour Committee organises such tours as that of a party of Public School boys for eight weeks in India—at the beginning of 1939. The Public Schools Exploring Society conducts parties of boys from the Public and Secondary Schools, provided with scientific instruments—in 1939 to Newfoundland. All these activities illustrate the realistic view that education should be not merely a theoretical preparation for life but actual practice in living, under supervised conditions which call for activity of mind and body, co-operation and self-control.

### II. SCOTLAND

The Scotch have always had an intense belief in education, both for its own sake and as a means of advancement in life. They have never regarded secondary education as a class privilege but as the sacred right of every child whose abilities enable him to profit by it. The traditional Scotch idea is that secondary education is not something distinct from elementary education but develops naturally from it. Scotland has been free from the sectarian disputes which have played so large a part in the story of English education. The Church of Scotland is a Presbyterian (not an Anglican) Church and controls the religious teaching in the schools, except in the schools of the Anglican and Roman Catholic minorities.

The Parish Schools date from an Act passed in 1696. They were paid for out of rates, but the Church appointed the masters. The "Burgh" Schools in the towns correspond roughly to the English Grammar Schools. But the Parish Schools gave higher education

## *British Education*

to their ablest pupils, and from both types of school boys of all ranks in society proceeded to the Universities.

The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 established School Boards, but their position was different from that in England. As we have seen, the English School Boards could provide elementary education only, and had no authority over Voluntary Schools. In Scotland both the "Burgh" and Parish Schools were transferred to the School Boards, which were required to keep them efficient. In 1905 the Church handed over their Training Colleges also to the State, but without sacrificing the control of religious instruction. In 1918 the School Boards were replaced by Education Authorities elected *ad hoc* for the counties and the four great cities, and the Anglican and Roman Catholic Schools were transferred to these on condition that their denominational religious teaching should continue. Thus almost the whole of the school system of Scotland came under State control. Since 1929 the Scottish Education Authorities, instead of being specially elected, have been the County and City Councils, as in the English system, and educational administration in Scotland today is very similar to that in England.

It is the duty of every Authority to make sufficient provision for all forms of primary, intermediate, and secondary education without payment of fees. The break between primary and advanced work is made at 12+, not at 11+ as in England. There is a National Committee for the Training of Teachers which controls the Training Centres and Colleges. All male teachers (except certain specialist teachers) must be graduates, and a very large proportion of the women teachers are also graduates.

The typical Scottish Secondary School is a mixed day school. At the end of the five-year course a Leaving Examination is taken and Certificates are issued to successful candidates by the Scottish Education Department. The movement which led to the foundation of many new Public Schools in England in the nineteenth century also produced four Public Schools of the English type in Scotland. Well-to-do parents tend increasingly to send their sons to these. But of children between 7 and 12 less than 2 per cent are in private schools.

There are four Universities in Scotland—St. Andrews (founded 1411), Glasgow (1450), Aberdeen (1495), and Edinburgh (1583). Like the modern English Universities they are in important cities, and in the University "Courts", as their governing bodies are called,

## *Northern Ireland*

the city is represented. They also resemble the continental and the modern English Universities in that they are non-residential and their fees are much lower than at Oxford and Cambridge. The Rector, who is the official President of the University "Court", is usually some notable politician or man of letters. He is elected triennially by the matriculated students in accordance with the earliest theory of University government under which the students elected their own Professors. In Scotland the great majority of the students still take the "Ordinary" rather than the more recent "Honours" Degree Course. They enter the Universities at an earlier age than in England, and the proportion of University students to the total population is twice as large as in England. Edinburgh, chiefly owing to the fame of its Medical School, draws as many students from the British Empire and foreign countries as Oxford and Cambridge do.

Technical education is provided by a system of continuation classes leading up to the sixteen Colleges and Schools of Art in the four centres of population. These are known as Central Institutions and their courses may serve as preparation for University degrees.<sup>1</sup>

### **12. NORTHERN IRELAND**

After Northern Ireland became, in 1921, a self-governing unit of the United Kingdom, its Parliament passed the Education Act of 1923 regulating education on much the same lines as those followed in England. This involved a great change, since neither elementary nor secondary education had previously been under public control. There are now eight Local Education Authorities, the Councils of each of the six Counties and of the County Boroughs of Belfast and Londonderry. Existing Voluntary Schools may be transferred to the L.E.A.s and the majority of Protestant schools have been so transferred : the Roman Catholics, on the other hand, have retained control of their schools, though at a financial sacrifice.

As the educational machinery is still so new, the Minister of Education and his permanent staff at present control the working of the schools more closely than in England. But the Local Authorities have done excellent work in the replacement of unsuitable buildings by modern ones of the best type.

<sup>1</sup> See *Administration of Public Education in Scotland* (H.M. Stationery Office); *Scottish Educational Services* (H.M. Stationery Office); *Scottish Education from Early Times to 1908*, Kerr (Cambridge University Press).

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Queen's College, Belfast, became the Queen's University of Belfast in 1909.<sup>1</sup>

### 13. WAR-TIME EDUCATION

But now, of course, all educational efforts in Britain are concentrated upon the problem of education in war-time. Under a Government scheme children have been evacuated from London and certain other districts to places less exposed to danger. As a rule these children are sharing the existing schools with the local children on a double-shift system, each group attending half time. In certain other districts the children have not been evacuated but have not been allowed to attend their schools till trenches or shelters have been provided for them. It has been particularly difficult to make arrangements for the Secondary Schools which have been evacuated. Several of the Public Schools have had their premises requisitioned by the Government, and most of these are sharing the premises of other schools of similar type. The students of London University are widely distributed. In the counties round London the disorganisation is naturally greatest ; thus in the county of Essex more than 14,000 Elementary School pupils and 16 Secondary Schools have been evacuated, while nearly 11,000 Elementary School pupils and 8 Secondary Schools have been transferred to the more distant parts of Essex from danger zones outside the county. But evacuation has not been compulsory, and the Authorities are thus faced with the problem of providing education for children who still remain in the areas which were included in the Government scheme. Some schools in London are now being reopened, and in some of the Colleges of London University, such as Birkbeck College, courses are being resumed.

Teachers, officials, and numerous voluntary workers are straining every nerve to minimise the interference of the War with education, and many town children are deriving much good from their migration into rural areas. The close of the South African War in 1902 and the close of the Great War in 1918 were both marked by a revival of interest in education, and it is confidently hoped by educational workers in Britain that the present War will ultimately prove a starting point for fresh educational development.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Year Book of Education* (published annually by Evans Bros.), which contains comprehensive articles on every aspect of education.

## *Conclusion*

### 14. CONCLUSION

It will be evident from what has been said that the British system of education is one of genuine freedom. The control exercised by the Central Authority is practically restricted to the expression of certain guiding principles, full scope being given to the initiative of the Local Authorities and the teachers. In its provision for education the State has no political axe to grind. Some people in Britain would define the purpose of education as the production of good citizens ; others might prefer to call it the full and harmonious development of the individual. The two purposes are really one and the same. In a free country the good citizen is one whose mind is so trained and informed that he can observe, inquire, think, and decide for himself. Those who wish their children to be brought up under the influence of particular political, religious, or social ideas are free to provide schools and societies of the type they desire, so long as they are not subversive of order in the State. But mass production of ideas is entirely foreign to British concepts of education. On the contrary, it is a practice in many schools to encourage the pupils to exercise their critical powers upon conflicting propagandist statements. The British Broadcasting Company is impartial in inviting the representatives of different schools of thought to state their case. It must be admitted, however, that the problem of how to reconcile the system of external examinations with freedom for educational development has not yet been solved.

Much, of course, remains to be done. It is, for instance, a great gap in our educational system that for the majority of British boys and girls education ends at 14. But, when conditions permit, that active belief in education which exists today will doubtless insist that this shall be remedied. Former scepticism was not wholly ill-founded ; it was due to a narrow conception of education as mainly book learning together with an instinctive popular feeling that courses of book learning, planned by intellectuals, were not the primary need of the mass of the people. But the latent dissatisfaction with traditional forms of education has become constructive, and has given rise to a wider conception which regards school " subjects " as means rather than as ends, and concerns itself with the environment, habits, skills, interests, and attitudes of mind of the pupils. Realism is the basis of the modern conception of education. In the words of the Spens

Report, "the emphasis in educational theory has shifted from the subject to the child". Or, as the *Suggestions* of the Board of Education put it, "We realise more and more the importance of broadening the aims of education and of placing greater emphasis on the social development of children". Education, thus interpreted, carries conviction and begets enthusiasm.

*Readers who wish to follow up this subject are recommended to consult "Education", a select list of recent books, which can be obtained for four-pence, post free, from the National Book Council, 3 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.2.*

The National Book Council issues also, in conjunction with the British Council, a longer Book List on "British Civilisation and Institutions" which covers history, politics, economics, language, literature, music, art, education, etc., etc. This list can be obtained from the above address for sevenpence, post free.

